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## Message from the Mayor

On March 10, I had the pleasure of joining Rodrigo de Rato, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), for an exciting occasion in my Ceremonial Office at the John A. Wilson Building. Mr. de Rato presented our city with a check for \$1 million for the District of Columbia's Housing Production Trust Fund. This donation is part of a \$2 million public amenities package associated with the rezoning process for the construction of a new office building adjacent to the IMF headquarters.

The money was a commitment that the Office of Planning requested as part of the amenities package for the Planned Unit Development. In exchange for a package of public benefits, the IMF was able to increase the density for its headquarters building on Pennsylvania Avenue between 19th and 20th Streets, NW. Ellen McCarthy, interim director of the Office of Planning, was instrumental in helping us work with the IMF to make these funds a reality.

It's exciting to have the IMF working with us as partners to improve life for the residents of Washington, DC, by providing \$1 million toward our Housing Production Trust Fund. The IMF and its sister financial institutions make our city one of the most important centers of international development finance in the world.

In the last six years, we've been making tremendous progress in housing in our city. We've got more than 30,000 units of housing either in production or in the pipeline—half of them designated as affordable housing. However, as the cost of housing soars in the District, the need for affordable housing increases greatly. The IMF's contribution will help us continue to encourage housing development that meets the requirements of our neediest residents. This partnership is an excellent example of how we're harnessing the engine of development in our downtown to provide benefits for neighborhoods across the city.

In addition to the IMF's housing commitment, I appreciate the organization's additional \$1 million commitment to:

- Provide retail at the street level on both 19th and 20th Streets, to help make the street more vibrant
- Beautify local parks and streetscapes
- Provide vital resources for the elderly residents of St. Mary's Court
- Help fund the DC Central Kitchen
- And work together to ensure the inclusion of local, small and disadvantaged business enterprises (LSDBEs) in IMF development

The IMF is an international organization of 184 member countries. It was established to promote international monetary cooperation, exchange stability, and orderly exchange arrangements; to foster economic growth and high levels of employment; and to provide temporary financial assistance to countries to help ease balance of payments adjustment.

For more information on the IMF, visit: <http://www.imf.org/>



## AGENCY WEBSITES

Office of Tax and  
Revenue

Department of Parks and  
Recreation

Department of  
Employment Services

Metropolitan Police  
Department

Office of Boards and  
Commissions

Commission on the Arts  
and Humanities

Department of Human  
Services

## LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

Hands on DC

DC Convention and  
Tourism

DC Public Library



# Wanda Alston

I want to pay my respects to Wanda Alston, who was tragically killed on March 16 at her home in Northeast. As many of our readers know, Wanda was a valuable staff member in the Executive Office of the Mayor. Her death is a huge loss for our city.

Last September, I signed a Mayor's Order establishing the Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs. I asked Wanda Alston to be the director of that office. Wanda is someone who stuck by me from the beginning with my first campaign for Mayor. I am left with many great memories of her wit and spirit.

Wanda's contributions to the people of this city were beyond measure. All of us will remember her as a passionate, determined, and energetic woman. She cared deeply for the people of this city and put her energy into helping make life better for our residents.

Wanda was someone to admire; she was someone to learn from; and she was someone we loved. This is a huge loss for me personally, but beyond that, this is a huge loss for our city. On behalf of the people of the District, and especially the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, I send my heartfelt and continued condolences to Wanda's family and to her many friends throughout the city.

She believed, as I do, that we as a city are the sum of many voices. Wanda's voice is one that I will truly miss. Her life exemplified one simple precept: To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world. With heavy hearts, we convey our prayers and love to the Alston family.



## National League of Cities Congressional City Conference

Last week and earlier this week, I had the chance to put on my "National League of Cities" cap and lead meetings of NLC officials at the organization's annual Congressional City Conference at the Washington Hilton near Dupont Circle.

City officials from across the country joined me in pushing for stronger local-federal partnerships and Congressional support for retaining the Community Development Block Grant program and other legislative priorities for cities and towns. The conference also gave me a chance to enlighten thousands of leaders from across the country about our city's lack of voting rights in Congress.

More than 225 million people live and work in the cities and towns across America. Big city or small, rural or urban, our leaders have a unique responsibility for providing essential services to our people—day in and day out. We must balance our budgets every year; keep community centers open, and make sure we have enough police on our streets.

As municipal officials, we work hand-in-hand with citizens; it's our job to know what they need and want.

To ensure that the National League of Cities has the pulse of our local governments, we conducted the *State of America's Cities* survey of about 450 cities in January. Let me share a few of the results.

First, we found that traffic congestion, city fiscal conditions, infrastructure and affordable housing were the top concerns of our cities. We also found that half of our city officials were more pessimistic about where the country is headed. Not since 1995 have 50 percent of city officials held this view.

And while they remained optimistic about the direction of cities, nearly one in three city officials said unemployment worsened in the past year and is a major problem for them. Also worsening for our cities in 2005 is traffic congestion, the impacts of unfunded mandates, and the cost and availability of health services.

To learn more about the National League of Cities and for more information on the *State of America's Cities* survey, visit:

- <http://www.nlc.org>

## Florida Trip for Libraries and Baseball

On March 5 and 6, I traveled to Florida for the Washington Nationals' spring training—and to watch two games: the Nationals playing the Baltimore Orioles in Ft. Lauderdale at the Orioles' home field, and the Nationals playing the Houston Astros at the Nationals' home field in Viera. Of course, I'm pleased that the Nationals were victorious in both games!

Joining me in Florida were Councilmembers Jack Evans (Ward 2) and Vincent Orange (Ward 5), along with Mark Tuohey, chairman of the District's Sports and Entertainment Commission, and Bill Hall, a member of the Sports and Entertainment Commission. In Florida, I had a chance to meet and greet baseball fans excited to have baseball back in Washington, DC.



When we announced that we were bringing baseball back to Washington, DC, we made a promise that the return of our National Pastime to America's Hometown would be about more than baseball: It would be about community, and our kids. It would be about bringing a major corporation to the District of Columbia—and spreading its benefits across our city.

For our kids, the promise will come true because at each home game, we'll make 500 tickets available for low-income residents. If you want to see the "Nats," you'll be able to see the Nats, at least once during the season. For our community, the promise will come true because Major League Baseball has already committed \$100,000 to improving youth facilities in the city. All the profits from the exhibition game on April 3 will go toward improving youth sports in our city.

Baseball means creating thousands of new jobs, millions in new revenue—and reviving one of our city's most treasured and tarnished jewels: the Anacostia River. From a quiet, dirty, forgotten waterway, the Anacostia can flow into a vibrant, bustling center of residential and commercial life.

While I was in Florida, I also had a chance to join members of my Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of the DC Public Library System. We toured the Miami-Dade Public Library, which is known for the community focus of both its central library and its many branches.

The director of the Miami Library has done a terrific job of creating a unique library system where the city's branch libraries are more like storefronts than institutions. These branch libraries are truly integrated into the community by their locations and by the offerings they provide to the community. The central library shares its home within the Miami-Dade Cultural Center with the Historical Museum of Southern Florida and the Miami Art Museum. The buildings are grouped around a central plaza where people sit, eat, read and participate in all kinds of activities.

## Grand Opening of Residence Inn Capitol

I was pleased to join officials from Marriott International, Inc., and Four Fires LLC, a financial partnership of Native American tribes and The Donohoe Companies, to celebrate the grand opening March 3 of the \$43 million Residence Inn by Marriott Capitol in Southwest.

The 13-story, 233-suite hotel is the first of several such joint ventures. The project was conceived and developed by The Donohoe Companies, a 120-year-old Washington, DC, full service real estate company. The Four Fires tribal partnership is the first of its kind to invest in a non-gaming hotel property. J.W. Marriott, Jr., chairman and CEO of Marriott International, and James A Donohoe III, president and CEO of The Donohoe Companies, joined us for the opening.

Marriott recently announced a \$1 billion diversity outreach initiative, which includes a commitment to double the number of minority-owned Marriott properties over the next five years. For Four Fires, the Residence Inn by Marriott Capitol represents a significant tribal investment in non-gaming enterprises.

Hospitality Partners of Bethesda will manage the property, which will feature amenities that include 2,400 square feet of meeting space, underground parking with 100 spaces, a business center, breakfast/evening reception area, fitness center, indoor pool and gift shop. The building was designed by BBGM - Architects & Interiors and has elements that are evocative of the design of the nearby National Museum of the American Indian.



# Mayor Receives Literacy Award from 'Everybody Wins'

On March 9, I was pleased to receive the National Capital Literacy and Mentoring Award from Everybody Wins! at the organization's 10th anniversary celebration at the Capital Hilton. Everybody Wins! is a great partner for our city. The organization is a leading national literacy and mentoring nonprofit devoted to increasing children's prospects for success in school and in life through one-to-one reading partnerships.

The award recognizes an individual for a significant contribution to children in the field of literacy. I was thrilled that Everybody Wins! selected me as a leading literacy advocate on behalf of adults and children throughout the District.

Everybody Wins! cited our city's newest initiative to reach out to children—the "Read With Me" partnership. Read with Me is a project of "The Early Chapters," which matches District government employees with early childhood literacy volunteer programs in the District. Each program pairs an adult literacy mentor with a preschool or early elementary school-aged child to read and engage in literacy-based activities.

Some Read With Me programs involve face-to-face meetings weekly. Others are conducted through the Internet. All of the programs provide opportunities to make a difference in the life of a child by fostering a love of reading and augmenting literacy skills.

As Mayor of this city, I understand that reading is essential for our survival. Last August, I unveiled the Lifelong Learning Initiative, a multimillion-dollar citywide effort to improve literacy among adults and to bring new resources and accountability to literacy efforts in the District. The District of Columbia has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in the nation—one in three DC residents reads only at or below a third-grade level.

I am convinced that there is a direct link between the overall health of a city and its literacy rate. I salute Everybody Wins! for celebrating a decade of reading and mentoring relationships in the Washington Metropolitan area. For more information on becoming involved in the "Read With Me" initiative, visit [www.cncs.dc.gov/cnscs/cwp/view,a,1197,q,537029.asp](http://www.cncs.dc.gov/cnscs/cwp/view,a,1197,q,537029.asp).

## District Activities



Mayor Williams joined city officials from across the country at the National League of Cities Congressional City Conference held in DC.



Mayor Williams, City Administrator Robert Bobb and other city officials held a press conference in front of DC General after an anthrax scare at government mail facilities in Virginia that turned out to be a false alarm. Prophylactic antibiotics were distributed at DC General to employees at the V Street, NE postal facility where mail is processed before it goes to government agencies.

## Community News

- [Registration Opens for the 2005 Summer Youth Employment Program](#)
- [CFO Releases Evaluation of Alternative Financing Plans for the Baseball Stadium](#)

[View All News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

**3/19 59th Annual DC Math, Science, and Tech Fair**  
8 am – 12 pm  
McKinley Technology High School  
151 T Street, NE  
**Judging: 3/19**  
**Award Ceremony: 3/20**

**3/20 National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade**  
10 am – 12 pm  
Constitution Ave, NW (from 7th to 17th Streets)

